



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
WASHINGTON, DC 20420

# DIVERSITY@WORK

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## Q&A: Diversity Serves the Nation's Veterans

*Part 2 of our interview with Dr. Jacob Lozada, Assistant Secretary for Human Resources and Administration. In this issue, he reminds us that it's all about America's veterans.*

**Q:** How has VA helped to improve advancement opportunities for diverse groups?

**Dr. Lozada:** One way we've done that is by promoting opportunities widely via technology and by encouraging executives to participate actively in training and development. For instance, I serve on the Leadership VA Board of Directors, and we cast the net more widely this year for LVA candidates using broadcasts, e-mail, and electronic publications. We can also point to our internship and mentor programs as opportunities for career advancement. Another method involves reaching outside VA. HR&A has just developed a new jobs Web site to help attract talent to the Department. We're also championing workforce succession planning VA-wide that incorporates diversity elements.



**Q:** Why is it important to include diversity in succession planning?

**Dr. Lozada:** It's vital because our primary mission is to care for veterans. To serve them well and understand their needs, we must mirror their diversity. VA has the technology to dig down into the numbers to find the gaps in our workforce. With so many employees eligible for retirement within the next few years, we have to plan ahead with diversity in mind. That best serves the Nation's veterans.

**Q:** Do you have a mentor?

**Dr. Lozada:** Yes, my prime mentor for the past 15 years has been Dr. Enrique Mendez, Jr., who served under the Bush I Administration as Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs. He sat in the front row during my Senate confirmation hearings, and that meant a great deal to me. I cannot stress enough how valuable it is to have a strong mentor when things get tough. ■

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## CELEBRATE!

### National American Indian Heritage Month

VA proudly joins the Nation in observing American Indian Heritage Month during November.

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there are nearly 2.5 million American Indians in our country. Their rich history speaks to us through the names of our cities, lakes, and rivers; the magnificent ruins of ancient communities; and most important, the lives of the people who retain the cultural, spiritual, linguistic, and

kinship bonds that have existed for millennia.

At VA, it's especially important to honor American Indians who have served in our armed forces. For instance, approximately 42,000 American Indians, 90 percent of them volunteers, fought in Vietnam.

For information on VA's National Native American Program, call (202) 273-5888.

### Bookmarks

- **NativeWeb**  
[www.nativeweb.org](http://www.nativeweb.org)
- **Black Facts Online**  
[www.blackfacts.com](http://www.blackfacts.com)
- **VA Center for Women Veterans**  
[www.va.gov/womenvet](http://www.va.gov/womenvet)
- **Organization of Chinese Americans**  
[www.ocanatl.org](http://www.ocanatl.org)
- **Hispanic Heritage Plaza**  
[www.hispaniconline.com/hh02](http://www.hispaniconline.com/hh02)
- **American Association of People With Disabilities**  
[www.aapd-dc.org/docs/info.html](http://www.aapd-dc.org/docs/info.html)



To join *NewsLink*, our free, weekly electronic news service, send an e-mail to [dmeeo@mail.va.gov](mailto:dmeeo@mail.va.gov) with SUBSCRIBE NEWS in the subject line.

Thanks to our *NewsLink* content partners for providing valuable diversity-related links:

- Access Board
- Business & Legal Reports
- EEOC
- *Federal Employees News Digest*
- FedNews Online
- FindLaw
- *Government Executive Magazine*
- HireDiversity.com
- *Hispanic Business Magazine*
- *HR Executive Magazine*
- Indian Country Today
- SHRM
- USAToday.com
- Washingtonpost.com
- *Workforce* magazine
- Workindex.com

## FIELD NOTES

### News You Can Use

#### A Focus on Training

The Office of DM&EEO offers numerous diversity-related training sessions for managers, supervisors, and staff. Here's a closer look at three programs that focus on career development, workforce analysis, and disabilities in the workplace.

##### It's Your Career!

This 2-day career development training program targets VA employees in grades 1 through 9 who are interested in moving to the next level of their careers. The course covers a wide range of career issues, from improving job performance to making a positive change in your personal development. Participants complete self-assessments, review occupational information, and develop Individual Development Plans (IDPs), under the guidance of an experienced instructor. Upon completion, participants are able to determine their goals, identify competencies, and discuss their IDPs with supervisors.

► More info: Contact Wanda J. Jones, [wanda.jones@mail.va.gov](mailto:wanda.jones@mail.va.gov).

#### Workforce Analysis & Evaluation

DM&EEO provides on-site workforce analysis training for managers of EEO/diversity, personnel, and program areas. This session provides a foundation understanding of the looming retirement crisis in government and the resulting need for stepped-up workforce planning efforts. It also offers hands-on instruction on using online VISN Support Service Center (VSSC) reports to conduct workforce analysis and succession planning, with an eye to diversity. The Office offers the companion *Guide to Conducting Workforce Analysis* on its Web site as well.

► More info: Contact Michael Dole, [michael.dole@mail.va.gov](mailto:michael.dole@mail.va.gov).

#### Disabilities in the Workplace

How do I accommodate staff with disabilities? What is an invisible disability? What is disability etiquette? These questions and more are answered in this informational session that educates staff and raises awareness about topics dealing with people with disabilities in the workplace.

► More info: Contact Noemi Hyman, [noemi.hyman@mail.va.gov](mailto:noemi.hyman@mail.va.gov).



#### For More Info

To find VA and other government diversity-related Web sites, visit [www.va.gov/dmeeo](http://www.va.gov/dmeeo) and click on Web Links.

## WEB SITE SPOTLIGHT

### National Museum of the American Indian

[www.nmai.si.edu](http://www.nmai.si.edu)

This site is a great starting point for visits to the museum's facilities in New York City or Suitland, Maryland. And coming soon: a new museum in the Nation's capital. Begin exploring the museum's offerings—from special art exhibits to children's programs—at the Calendar link. It just scratches the surface though; the collections range from wood and stone carvings from the U.S. Northwest to elaborate featherwork from the peoples of Amazonia.

**Content:** Public outreach on events, collections, and community services. The site will offer a comprehensive online database in 2005, complete with digitized images of the collections.

**Must-see feature:** Virtual Exhibitions found under the Education and Programs link.

**Contact info:** Webmaster, membership and collections staffs, internship information, and public affairs contacts.

**Accessibility:** No information offered.

## INSIDE STORY

### A Demographic Profile of VA

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*Here's an excerpt from VA's Annual Affirmative Employment Program (AEP) Accomplishment Report, highlighting data from FY01. The full text of the report is found online at [www.va.gov/dmeeo/annualreports.htm](http://www.va.gov/dmeeo/annualreports.htm).*

#### Population:

There were 202,995 permanent employees in VA at the end of FY01, down from 213,189 at the end of FY96.

#### Turnover:

- VA hired 16,228 people, up from 12,283 hired in FY00.
- VA separated 17,457 people, down from 18,028 separated in FY00.
- There were 26,599 retirement eligibles in FY01; an additional 63,781 will become eligible over the next 4 years.

#### Onboard Staff:

- American Indians - 0.86% of VA staff
- Asian Americans - 5.36%
- Blacks - 24.20%

#### Onboard Staff (continued):

- Hispanics - 6.30%
- Whites - 63.24%
- Women (all groups) - 57.29%

#### Upper Grades:

- GS-13 - 8,171 employees (38.63% women, 18.10% minorities)
- GS-14 - 2,980 (32.04% women, 17.71% minorities)
- GS-15 - 12,035 (24.21% women, 26.00% minorities)

#### People With Disabilities:

- VA employed 14,014 (6.90%) people with disabilities in FY01.
- VA employed 3,185 (1.57%) staff with targeted disabilities.
- VA employed 15,296 (7.54%) disabled veterans, up from 14,688 (7.46%) in FY 00.

*For more information on using workforce data to help identify barriers to diversity, contact Lenore Jacobs at [lenore.jacobs@mail.va.gov](mailto:lenore.jacobs@mail.va.gov).*

## SPECIAL EMPHASIS

### Secretary's 14th Annual EEO Awards

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DM&EEO administers the Secretary's Annual Equal Employment Opportunity Awards Program, which is the highest recognition bestowed on staff who have excelled in EEO program contributions at VA.

The annual awards ceremony took place this year on November 15 in Washington, DC. A crowd of 200-plus guests joined VA Deputy Secretary Leo S. Mackay, Ph.D.; Assistant Secretary of HR&A Jacob Lozada, Ph.D.; and DM&EEO Deputy Assistant Secretary Armando E. Rodriguez to honor award recipients. Special guests included Dr. Robert Roswell, Under Secretary for Health; Daniel Cooper, Under Secretary for Benefits; and Gordon Mansfield, Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs, among others.

Awardees and presenters pictured here (left to right) include Beverly Kimball (Oklahoma City



VAMC), Gary Devansky (Coatesville, PA, VAMC), Cecilia Franklin (Philadelphia Regional Office and Insurance Center), Jose Coronado (South Texas Veterans Health Care System, San Antonio), Pamela McKinney (Oklahoma City VAMC), Dr. Lozada, Judy McKee (Fayetteville, AR, VAMC), Sammy Lee Maze (VA Healthcare System, Loma Linda, CA), Michelle U'Ren (VA Central California Health Care System, Fresno, CA), and Armando Rodriguez.

Event guests enjoyed a lively workshop on "Understanding Cultural Differences" presented by Maria Mercedes Olivieri of the Office of Personnel Management. In addition, a special diversity leadership award was presented to Jose Coronado, Director of the Audie L. Murphy VAMC.

For more information on the awards program, contact Noemi Pizarro-Hyman at (202) 273-8921.

## Diversity@Work

Newsletter published bimonthly by the Office of Diversity Management & Equal Employment Opportunity. To subscribe Or unsubscribe, send an e-mail request to [dmeeo@mail.va.gov](mailto:dmeeo@mail.va.gov).

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(See our Web site for staff e-mail addresses.)

### COMING SOON

- ▶ Q&A with Dr. Robert Roswell, VA Under Secretary for Health
- ▶ Celebrate Black History Month!
- ▶ Tips on using special hiring authorities
- ▶ 2003 Diversity Calendar
- ▶ More news, tools, and views

## DM&EEO ONLINE

The mission of the Office of DM&EEO is to provide leadership in creating and sustaining a diverse workforce free of discrimination at the Department of Veterans Affairs. Here's a sampling of new

online tools that can help you promote workplace diversity and enhance the employment of women, minorities, veterans, and people with disabilities:

- 2003 Spring Internship Guide
- Activities for special observances
- *Vanguard* magazine: Hispanic Heritage issue

Bookmark our site; we're here to serve you.



## DIVERSITY CALENDAR

### Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians

November 10-15

San Diego, CA

[www.ncai.org](http://www.ncai.org)

### Veterans Day

November 11

[www.va.gov/vetsday](http://www.va.gov/vetsday)

### Asian Diversity Conference & Job Fair at Jacob Javits Center

November 14-15

New York City

E-mail: [info@asiandiversity.com](mailto:info@asiandiversity.com)

### Multicultural Institute Conference

November 14-17

Washington, DC

[www.nmci.org/conf/current/default.asp](http://www.nmci.org/conf/current/default.asp)

### NAHFE Annual Conference

November 18-22

Washington, DC

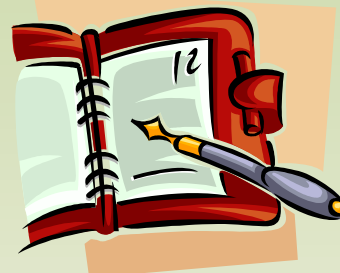
[www.nahfe.org](http://www.nahfe.org)

### Perspectives of Employment of Persons with Disabilities

Bethesda, MD

December 4-6

<http://grad.usda.gov/perspectives>



*Looking ahead to 2003:*

### Dr. Martin Luther King Birthday

January 15 (observed January 21)

[www.thekingcenter.org](http://www.thekingcenter.org)

### Black History Month

February

[www.va.gov/dmeeo/bhm.htm](http://www.va.gov/dmeeo/bhm.htm)

### National Women's History Month

March

[www.nwhp.org](http://www.nwhp.org)

### SHRM 20th Annual Employment Law and Legislative Conference

March 10-12

Washington, DC

[www.shrm.org/conferences](http://www.shrm.org/conferences)

*For more events, visit our Web site and select the Calendar link.*